CNN DEATH OF FIRST LADY NANCY REAGAN (3-6-2016)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0)

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From Sunday, March 6th, 2016 CNN Live coverage of the death of First Lady Nancy Regan who died of heart failure at age 94. Reagan was born in New York City on July 6th, 1921 and was married to the 40th President of the United States, Ronald Reagan from 1952 until his death in 2004. She was previously an actor and served as First Lady of California from 1967 - 1975 and First Lady of The United States from 1981-1989.

- Announcement came at 11:49 A.M E.T

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[Music] this is cnn breaking news [Music] i'm wolf blitzer in flint michigan we are very sad to report breaking news right now nancy reagan the former first lady of the united states has passed away very sad moment for all of us especially those of us who covered nancy reagan so many of those years those wonderful years when her husband was president of the united states nancy reagan has passed away at the age of 94. we're going to have extensive coverage of mrs reagan beginning with a look back at her remarkable remarkable years ronnie and nancy it was truly an american love story i can't imagine marriage being any other way but the way that ronnie's in mine was and i guess that's unusual a little bit of a miracle too right something in the gods brought you together [Music] fortunately a relationship not based on politics or power but simply admiration and affection we're going a long long way born anne francis robbins in new york city she lived and grew up in chicago known by the nickname nancy as an adult she headed west to hollywood to become an actress she signed with mgm she became part of that family at first nancy davis was busy but in 1949 she found her name on a list of suspected communist sympathizers in danger of being blacklisted from the business the person on the list turned out to be another actress with the same name but nancy wanted reassurance she turned to a friend for help who set up a meeting with the president of the screen actors guild a dashing leading man named ronald reagan and thus began one of hollywood's and

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and thus began one of hollywood's and washington's most enduring romances in fact one of her last screen appearances was playing opposite her future husband in a movie called hellcats of the navy soon after they wed they raised a family including their children patty and ron jr and her husband's two children maureen and michael from his previous marriage to jane wyman in 1966 ronald reagan began a second career as a full-time politician and was elected governor of the nation's largest state california duties upon which nancy was always at his side and always gazing at him with that loving stare it was for real that wasn't an actress the adoration that they had for each other i congratulate you sir [Applause] that i i don't remember thinking anything except that my gosh here he is and he's president my ronnie my ronnie after her husband's presidential inauguration nancy reagan's signature was appearing in designer gowns especially red ones she also redecorated the white house both moves drawing heavy criticism but she had her own special grit especially after an assassin's bullet struck her husband she never left the hospital few knew then how close the president came to dying just a couple of months into his first term yes touch and go yes it was i almost lost him she also battled breast cancer and survived through it all she had many admirers and some critics

too chief among them her husband's former chief of staff donald regan who wrote a blistering book about her including the fact that she sometimes consulted an astrologer he's chosen to attack my wife and i don't get kindly upon that she also used her influence to launch an anti-drug program which was reduced to a simple phrase

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which was reduced to a simple phrase when a young girl asked for advice and the first lady said simply just say no i didn't mean that that was the whole answer obviously but it did serve a purpose after she and her husband left washington she needed her stamina more than ever after ronald reagan was diagnosed with alzheimer's it it's sad to see somebody you love and have been married for so long and you can't share memories [Music] that's the sad part through it all she never lost her optimism do you ever feel that fate treated you badly no uh-uh no when you when when you balance it all out i've had a pretty fabulous life in 2004 president ronald reagan died in one of her final public appearances the celebration of the centennial ronald reagan's birth she said i know that ronnie would be thrilled and is thrilled [Music] to have all of you share in his 100th birthday doesn't seem possible but that's what it is nancy reagan a strong woman in her own right remembered also for her steady unflinching devotion to her husband both in and out of the spotlight [Music] and now very sad news nancy reagan unfortunately has passed away at the age of 94 very sad moments she became the first lady of the united states on january 20th 1981 when her husband ronald reagan became the 40th president of the united states david gergen was among the aides working for president reagan he's joining us on the phone right now david a very sad moment some immediate reflections of nancy reagan well wolf as you know and you were there for much of it too uh and it was a great one of the great

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uh and it was a great one of the great love stories of american political life there as a couple they came together in the early 1950s and it changed ronald reagan's life he was you know he was ending his his movie career but but his first marriage had ended badly he was he was lonely and he was uncertain of himself and he met nancy and they together went through this the 50s together which bonded very very closely he became much more conservative during those years uh and then of course he had his great lead forward with the goldwater campaign in 1964 but turning to the presidency itself she was his anchor through those presidential years and much of the success that he had he attributed to her uh you know he had he he could go out and take on the lions wherever they might be but coming home to nancy at night was a very very important part of his uh well-being as a person and they were very private they didn't like to make a lot of phone calls you know some presidents are extremely parapathetic they want to be on the phone all the time you can think about an lpj or or bill clinton uh they they were not they wanted to be together uh and she she didn't try to guide his presidency but if you were on staff you you kept your eye on nancy because she could read him better than anyone else now ken buberstein who was his final chief of staff used to call messi every morning before he came to work to ask about how's he doing how's he feeling you know what what can we do to make his life better today and she was really helpful for that and very importantly she was also a great force for ronald reagan pursuing arms control uh with it with the soviet union at the time when he first came in you know he was a big conservative he had a major defense build up but he always she always kept her eye on a larger prize and that was peace and she was a she she had a great deal of influence on him he surprised a great many people what he wanted to sit down and negotiate with

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wanted to sit down and negotiate with the soviets and when he had garbage off there but it made a huge difference it was an amazing love story wasn't it david yes it certainly was you know you you to this day you can in your mind you if you if you remember reagan you also remember her by side staring up with that sort of wonderful gaze that she was totally absorbed and and i just was told they were totally devoted to each other and i i think i think they each helped the other sort of come to a much much better place in life uh and

just so many times she was she was the one because she cared about him so deeply who ensured that the staff didn't over schedule it that they paid attention to his age and and you know that he was a little bit more fragile as the years went on and she wanted to care for him and she she did that she did a great loving care and you know all through the alzheimer's years and she continued to keep that claim alive out to reagan library with visitors and conferences and that sort of thing and any number of people have gone through i went through i'm sure you've been through many times and it was always nancy was always the one that kept playing a lot we just got a tweet from michael reagan let me read it for our viewers i am saddened by the passing of my stepmother nancy reagan she is once again with a man she loved god bless that from michael reagan just moments ago the the words are beginning to come in very very quickly the remembrances nancy reagan the former first lady of the united states has passed away at the age of 94. david he often would consult with her although even on the as you point out even on some of the most important issues but she never really stepped out and talked about national security other issues like that she was a much more private person although he had total confidence in her she did not feel it was her place to stand on

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stand on on the public issues that that began to change the whole tradition of first ladies being you know taking on causes of course goes all the way back to eleanor roosevelt but in modern times it was hillary clinton who who became a very different kind of first lady and we've seen a lot of that since uh prior to michelle obama but nancy nancy was there more for him and she did have her causes you know the just say no cause but but she thought her first and foremost duty was to be there with him uh and uh the other thing she did was she not only guarded his schedule and thought a lot about arms control but she was very she was the one who kept an eye on how well are the people around romney how loyal are they how how how are they looking after him do they understand him are they really on the team and frankly she was the one who said if you know if you're not on the team you know ronnie you've probably got to get this person out of there uh the major change when don regan was i've been former head of merrill lynch and he you know his treasury secretary then he came over as chief of staff in the second term and that's he just decided that he was not up to the job uh and and basically when the land country came on she forced him out uh she she was the enforcer uh and that was a healthy thing every every president needs somebody around who's gonna be the enforcer we just got a statement from joanne drake the spokesperson on the reagan library let me read it to you to you and our viewers nancy davis reagan former first lady of the united states died this morning at her home in los angeles at the age of 94 the cause of death was congestive heart failure mrs reagan will be buried at the ronald reagan presidential library in simi valley california next to her husband ronald wilson reagan who died on june 5th 2004. prior to the funeral service there will be an opportunity for members of the public to pay their respects at the

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the public to pay their respects at the library details will be announced in lieu of flowers mrs reagan requested the contributions be made to the ronald reagan presidential library and foundation at www.reaganlibrary.com for continuous information on the works work of the reagan library you can go to the reagan library website as well anita mcbride is joining us on the phone right now former chief of staff for the former first lady anita thanks very much a very sad time for all of us who remember covering nancy reagan better on several occasions what goes through your mind at this really really sensitive moment it is a sensitive moment actually and and the first thought that i had when i heard the news was now she's with her i love husband again who she missed so much and the last time i saw mrs break in 2008 back in 2007 in fact at the um dinner for her match between elizabeth the white tight dinner at the white house and asking her how she was doing and she said you know people tell me that it gets better every with each passing day but i use money so much it only gets worse worse and i've never forgotten that i mean such an incredible love story and they were partner with each other in every single way and in their marriage and of course and in his work as governor and as president she was a true partner to the presidency in every in every standpoint and as i i mentioned to david gergen those of us who remember the relationship and you were there you were the chief of staff for the then first lady there was an unbelievable love story between these two people

wasn't was it there well i was a young staffer in the rink and white house of course that was just after first lady laura bush who had a very nice relationship with mr slogan but what i remember as the staff member in the racing white house

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staff member in the racing white house she set such a standard for elegance and style we all felt it and she she brought that to the white house within her entertaining in a way you know that she dressed and even in the edict that lee hall had that no women would wear pants in the west wing and that was fine with us i mean there was you know a decorum that she brought back to the white house that was really important and such a part of her legacy an amazing woman indeed anita stand by david gergen she was on in addition to being a wonderful loving wife a confidant she was tough that was the reputation she had inside the white house right you did not want to cross messy reagan especially when she thought you were leaning on ronnie for her i loved how so too too much now she she recognized that a white house as you know so well off it is it's just full of pressure for people who want to tell the president something they want to send a memo to it and those memos can just stack up so that the president can go home at night with just tons and tons of paper to go through in a heavy schedule and everybody wants his time and nancy was the person who said hold on guys slow this down let's keep it at pace he doesn't have to do everything don't send him memos that are 10 pages long put it in one or two pages uh don't don't keep him up at night because he's diligent he'll try to read it and uh she just understood his she and michael beaver especially michael were almost a son to them um and and mike was there as a along with the triumphant of jim baker and niece in the beginning but and might say through uh much of it he was he and nancy talked all the time and she looked to him and they sort of figured out together how do we make sure we take we we get the best out of this man allowed him to have his best but not overburden him uh he was 11 years and you just you want to be careful reserve

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be careful reserve you know his reservoirs of strength for the big things not for all the trivial things that could come across the president's desk stand by for a moment david jeffrey lord is joining us as well the former reagan white house political director and jeffrey you knew nancy reagan you obviously knew the former the late president of the united states what goes through your mind at this moment you know listening to david and i i well if i was a young associate director of political affairs it's not but some of the things that so i would see her mostly at public events and that sort of thing but there are two incidents that stand out on one occasion in the political office this is in the fall of i think 1986 which was a pretty hard fought congressional campaign those of us in the white house political office had set up a series of trips to the president's stops across the country he's going to leave the white house you know in the morning and head across and do these various events and he's going to end up in i think in washington state or somewhere on the west coast or and what have you and then of course we were going we were going to fly him back to the white house on air force one well this is mrs reagan called suffice to say she was not happy and she said you know my husband is whatever age he was at the time 70 something you were not going to fling him across the country and then fling him back on the same day so we are staying in california thank you very much that was the beginning of the end of that discussion so she was as david says extremely protective of her husband later in life uh after president reagan was diagnosed with alzheimer's i had a family member that i was very close to my father's sister and you know was very involved with taking care of her and i wrote mrs reagan a note well to my surprise i got back this lovely handwritten lengthy note discussing uh the president's situation and discussing you know taking care of somebody with alzheimer's and everything and i thought that was you know emblematic of the

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know emblematic of the of another side of nancy reagan the care and the compassion that she she could feel for people and she was she was just wonderful and she became so active in alzheimer's disease her husband ronald reagan he announced he was suffering from alzheimer's after he left office in 1994 and she

became very active uh in the uh ronald and nancy reagan research institute to support alzheimer's research worked on that and several other causes she became very passionate in the post in her post white house years but during those years at the white house she was always by his side wasn't she yeah absolutely she was she was i mean that was her that was her first second and last objective always was to take care of ronnie as she called him i mean she was extremely protective of him and and that extended at every possible level whether it was policy issues you know talking to him about you know arms control and the soviets and all that i believe she had an interaction with the ambassador gramico in the day in which uh she she talked about he said something to her about whispering things to her husband and and all of this sort of thing about the soviets and and arms control whether it was things like that whether it was personnel i mean she was bound and determined that there would not be a staff member in that white house that was taking advantage of her husband uh or whether it was the the kind of simple things that that you know young people like myself would think you know oh let's just get let's get ronald reagan out there to campaign for x and schedule a whole day around it uh she would have none of it she was very very protective of it and i think she did it you know she was wonderful in that sense and if if she felt one of the young staffers like you was maybe making a mistake doing something that she didn't think was the right thing to do it became very clear very quickly right toast in short yes

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toast in short yes yes i mean you know you could survive it uh but it was best not to go there period surprised to say i know david yeah david gergen is still with us as well uh the the the image we all had of her was this loving wife a wonderful woman we really didn't know about the strength and the the toughness of her until later david that was at least the impression i got from the outside but you were there on the inside you remember those years very well oh she was she was uh it could be extremely tough uh she was the enforcer or somebody uh you know somebody has to be in any organization who looks who says who's measuring up and who's not and she didn't measure up in her eyes you didn't stay very long um if it somehow you quietly sort of left but let me come back to one other element and she was not only protected with him together they were very protective of the presidency as an office they very much but i think that today when we're going through this sort of a boisterous sometimes uh campaign uh they very much believe in the dignity of the presidency and ronald reagan would never go in the oval office without a suit and tie on and then when he was shot you know he famously came to the hospital and the first thing he did when he got out of the car was the button calling me and he then he walked across to the doctors and then when he was out of sight of pressy collapse that was they very much believe dignity was as important so it was my understanding of that when he was diagnosed with alzheimer's and they she sort of was helping him along uh she got to the point where she thought that for him to go out and give a talk or something like that in in public it might be embarrassing for him and she did not want him to lose his dignity ever and she was the one who said no more we're not is that this is the last public event we're

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that this is the last public event we're doing you know we're going to fade off and he had this long grand goodbye i remember those days frank sesno's joining us on the phone right now frank was cnn's white house correspondent during the 80s covered the reagan presidency remembers all of those years very very well he knows a professor over at george washington university in washington frank pretty shocking 94. it's a good life she had a wonderful life indeed but still very sad to learn that nancy reagan is no longer with us that's very true willful nancy reagan was a powerful powerful figure in that reagan white house she was always the most protective person of the president and she called as we know ronnie i interviewed her for a documentary i did on the on the reagan legacy i did the documentary for cnn and one for the history channel and really got a chance actually get to know her and the whole family in many ways it was not a very functional family in many ways there was a lot of and internal feuding over a variety of things but her agenda always always always was her beloved ronnie she was the moving force behind the very high profile dismissal of the president's then chief of staff donald regan following the iran confer affair she was the one who rushed to the hospital having had some premonition she described almost as that something had gone

wrong that day when the president was shot she was the one who fiercely guarded his events and his safety including consulting an astrologer following the assassination so she always was his alter ego his companion and his deep deep partner throughout life it was an amazing relationship they had the tributes are beginning to come into cnn frank stand by for a moment mitt romney just posted this on facebook with the passing of nancy reagan we say a final goodbye to the days of ronald

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a final goodbye to the days of ronald reagan with charm grace and a passion for america this couple reminded us of the greatness and the endurance of the american experiment some underestimate the influence of a first lady but from martha and abigail through nancy and beyond these women have shaped policy strengthened resolve and drawn on our better angels god and ronnie have finally welcomed a choice soul home that statement from mitt romney just coming in gloria borger is joining us on the phone right now gloria like me like frank you you covered the reagan administration in the 1980s and you have some recollections of nancy reagan i do and i i want to echo what david gergen was saying earlier which was that nancy reagan really was kind of the protector in chief of her husband and we talk about the evolving role of first ladies hillary clinton having sort of a major policy role on on health care nancy reagan's role was very much behind the scenes and she had she had a public role in her just say no campaign on drugs but her her real role was to protect her husband and to make sure that everyone around him was on the same page and working for him i think she really had kind of a keen sense of public relations because i remember after she had been criticized if you were called for buying fancy white house china do you remember that wolf and then the gridiron gridiron dinner and there was the gridiron dinner was just last night in washington dc she did a very famous sketch to secondhand rose remember that and she sort of came out making fun of herself and that was when sort of public opinion about nancy reagan changed in a way because they said you know what she can laugh at herself

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know what she can laugh at herself and and it was a brilliant it was a it was a brilliant moment for her and everything she did was in in reagan's interest and like most political spouses she really had his ear she's the last person he spoke to at night and ronald reagan knew that in her he had his most loyal soldier and if she felt something was wrong and david could speak to this she would go to her husband and staff would go through her to her husband it was it was a way to get to ronald reagan when you needed something to be done a lot of us also remember that she was instrumental in urging her husband who was then president of the united states to try to establish some sort of personal relationship with the new soviet president at that time back in 1985 mikhail gorbachev and they did establish a relationship and we all remember the the beginning of the end of the cold war that developed in the years that followed she was instrumental in those in in all aspects of his presidency during those eight years jake tapper is now joining us he's in washington jake this is a sad moment for those of us who remember those years of the reagan presidency it truly is wolf she was and remained one of the most admired women in america long after she and her husband had left the white house and in fact her influence was felt up until recently in 2011 you might remember governor chris christie of new jersey was invited to give a speech at the reagan library and there was all this buzz about whether or not nancy reagan was among those who at the time wanted chris christie to run for office um she made some encouraging comments uh she denied reports that she wanted chris christie to that she was in any way in any way pushing him

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was in any way in any way pushing him but it just goes to show that that her influence and her approval was so important when we were um moderating and hosting the debate the republican debate last september at the reagan library it was clear then based on accounts from her family and from those who worked at the reagan library that her health was failing and in fact the last few years whenever there was that picture of nancy uh at her husband's grave memorializing him less and less did you see actually her face in those

pictures they became more and more from from behind showing her grieving as opposed to showing her face so you know she she had been ailing so it's not a complete surprise and and yet it is remarkable when you take a step back and and think about how influential she remained whether it was her advocacy for research when it came to alzheimer's or her hosting political events such as that speech i just mentioned people really admired her they really cared about her and as others have mentioned wolf one of the things that was so touching about her was her love for her husband ronald reagan as you know published several of his several collections and memories and one of them was a a love letter that he wrote to nancy reagan uh included in one of these collections on their 31st wedding anniversary and it said quote i'm more than love you i'm not whole without you you are life itself to me when you are gone i'm waiting for you to return so i can start living again nancy reagan published some of the love letters she received from him and she noted uh if either of us ever left the room we both felt lonely people don't always believe this but it's true filling the loneliness completing each

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filling the loneliness completing each other that's what it's still meant to us to be husband and wife it's such a such a beautiful beautiful sentiment uh and just to behold the the love of this very public couple um is uh is really a remarkable thing i'd love to to bring in jeffrey lord um who worked in that white house and and saw evidence of this when the cameras were away and nobody was paying attention other than the staff and jeffrey it must have been quite a thing to to behold the love that these two had for each other they would hold hands uh i remember being in on the state floor of the white house and there was an event in the uh in the east room and the president and mrs reagan were you know sort of in a holding room as it were which turned out to be the green room and uh they went in there and did the event and all this sort of thing and then they came back to the green room which kind of she kind of feigned you know moss collapse you know as if she's exhausted uh i remember reaching for his hand i mean it was it was a constant display of affection and i remember on one occasion she this is when she was discovered to have breast cancer and i was working late that night and he had been at the hospital um with her and suddenly you know the word came to the staff that he's coming back on marine one and laying on the lawn and could we go out there and you know those of us who were there go out there just as a show of support well i have to say he he he got off the helicopter and he did the thing that americans are familiar with eternally you know the smile and the weight and all that kind of thing but once he got inside he broke down in tears so uh gosh it makes me a little edgy thinking about it uh yeah they were very very close it was a beautiful thing we just got a statement

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just got a statement from former first lady barbara bush on the passing of nancy reagan it says quote nancy reagan was totally devoted to president reagan and we take comfort that they will be reunited once more george and i send our prayers and condolences to her family that's obviously a reference to her husband former president george h.w bush gloria borger uh is still with us and gloria um it's not a bad thing i guess in retrospect you know when you think about somebody when you talk about somebody to say she was completely devoted to the love of her life we should all be so remembered uh yeah i i think that you know particularly these days uh jake when you look at political couples and there are questions well really are they a real couple are they not a real couple what's the you looked at you looked it at those two and you understood uh their relationship i mean they're they they it just exuded uh from them there was nothing false at all about it and it extended you know not you know nancy reagan would go to the ranch uh with ronnie as she called him and you know the ranch she didn't love clearing the brush and doing all the rest but he loved it it was a place that rejuvenated him she felt it was a life extender for him and she went right because that was where he felt the most comfortable in the world and she was absolutely devoted and that might seem like a sort of an old-fashioned thing but i think that it worked for her and it worked for him and there's nothing wrong with devotion and marriage right and um they were an absolute team inside the white house and i think that while she wasn't involved in heavy duty policy issues the way say hillary clinton promoted health care she

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promoted health care she did make sure that people who had things to say that were important to him got through to him she was not uninvolved in the least she was involved as people knew she could be a messenger when they needed a messenger to take something that that was important to him about the way he was being perceived about staffing about things that he needed to do to push things forward in his administration and i think she also had a real political sense how aran contra was playing for him and i think she she had she you know she she had a good ear for things like that and the people could go to her they also however didn't want to get on the wrong side of her because that was a bad place to be if you're just joining us nancy davis reagan the former first lady of the united states the strongest supporter of her late husband conservative icon president ronald reagan nancy reagan died this morning at her home in los angeles she was 94. we're going to take a quick break we'll be right back look we need energy some say gotta rely on alternatives wind solar or stick with oil natural gas traditional energy try this all of the above now that's real energy security i'm maggie and i'm an energy voter enough pressure in here for you i'm gonna take me some next sinus max too late we're about to take off these dissolve fast the new liquid gels and you're coming with me you realize i have gold status using x sinus max liquid gels dissolves fast to unleash max strength medicine let's end this [Music]

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[Music] stop clicking around book direct at hilton.com for the lowest price online [Music] and start playing start relaxing start loving book direct at hilton.com and start saving we're the hotties young company around but if we want to keep the soda pop flowing we need fresh ideas got it we slow we die what about cashing out no i'm trying to build something here how about using fedex ground for shipping i don't need some kid telling me how to run a business i've been doing this for four long months fedex ground can help us save money and deliver fast to our customers not bad kid you remind me of a younger me aiden the dog's eating your retainer again let's take a short five minute recess fedex ground is faster to more locations than ups ground pace is a place with a helpful hardware i seed i water and all i seem to get is mud ace is a place that knows you can't mow money that's it that's it it's scott's days at ace stock up and get up to 130 and it's a savings on select scott's products staying in rhythm it's how i try to live how i stay active so i need nutrition that won't weigh me down for the nutrition you want without the calories you don't try boost 100 calories each delicious snack size drink gives you 25 vitamins and minerals and 10 grams of protein so it's big in nutrition and small in calories i'm not about to swim in it slowly stay strong stay active with boost think you know t-mobile's coverage think again in the last year we've doubled our lte coverage our new extended range lte now reaches twice as far and is four times better in buildings see for yourself at t-mobile.com coverage at ally bank no branches equals great rates it's a fact kind of like social media equals anti-social meet my fiance denise hey

00:38:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=2282s)

denise hey good to meet you dennis by 2050 we'll need twice the food from the same acreage to feed the world that's going to take serious innovation i'm john research agronomist at coke we're challenging ourselves to create more advanced fertilizers that deliver nutrients to our crops more efficiently while respecting our environment so farmers can apply less and grow more we are coke [Music] we've got to build the economy for the future abundant american oil and natural gas can give us a real leg up more affordable energy better jobs more money for our communities that's going to work for generations to come i'm melanie and i'm an energy voter closed captioning brought to you by invent help call 1-888-909-4332 people ask me all the time george what do i do with my idea for a new product i tell them call my friends at invent help call for free information welcome back to our special coverage the passing of nancy reagan she passed away at her home in los angeles today at the age of 94. i'm wolf blitzer in flint michigan jake tapper is reporting from washington a spokeswoman for nancy reagan said the former first lady died at the age of 94 the cause of death congestive heart failure mrs reagan will be buried at the ronald reagan presidential library in semi valley california right next to her husband ronald wilson reagan who died on june 5th 2000 for we're getting

we're getting statements right now from all sorts of people who remember her fondly donald j trump just tweeted nancy reagan the wife of a truly great president was an amazing woman she will be missed ted cruz tweeted nancy reagan will be remembered for her deep passion for this nation and love for her husband ronald

00:40:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=2400s)

love for her husband ronald the reagan family is in our prayers jake a lot of us remember the unique role she played after the assassination attempt against her husband on march 30th 1981 when almost every day thereafter she became what was often described as his personal protector having lived through that awful awful experience no indeed and the truth is that anybody who admired the presidency of ronald reagan uh has to give credit to nancy reagan as has been written theirs was a universe of two they truly adored and worshipped one another and were there for one another and there would have been no reagan revolution there would have been no reagan administration i think it's fair to say at least not to the degree that that it succeeded without nancy reagan she was such an integral part of his confidence of his success suzanne malveaux fired filed this remembrance of nancy reagan for us ronnie and nancy it was truly an american love story i can't imagine marriage being any other way but the way that ronnie's in mine was and i guess that's unusual a little bit of a miracle too right something in the gods brought you together [Music] fortunately oh my dear a relationship not based on politics or power but simply admiration and affection together we're going a long long the joy they shared a sharp contrast to the unsettled childhood she endured born anne francis robbins in new york city her mom and dad separated before she was even born

00:42:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=2520s)

she was even born her mother edith toured with a theater company while the future first lady lived with an aunt and uncle when she was seven her mother married a chicago neurosurgeon named loyal davis he adopted her and until she headed west to hollywood to become an actress she lived and grew up in chicago known by the nickname nancy she told me that mgm was like a big family that she signed with mgm she became part of that family they took care of her she wasn't you know afraid even at her age to go out there by herself because she was surrounded by people to help her so young so trusting trust me once in hollywood nancy davis was busy but she almost failed before she even began because it was the heir of joe mccarthy and the infamous red scare witch hunt in 1949 her name appeared on a target list of suspected communist sympathizers upset she turned to a friend for help but out of this anguish came the most dramatic turning point of her life her friend set up a meeting with the president of the screen actors guild a dashing leading man named ronald reagan i have my suspicions based on listening to her talk about it that she really was she wanted to fix this but she also wanted to meet ronald reagan because she had heard how available and cute he was and thus began one of hollywood's and washington's most enduring romances in fact one of her last screen appearances was playing opposite her future husband in a movie called hellcats of the navy her official biography still featured on the current white house website quotes her as saying my life really began when i married my husband after being wed in this california church she did become devoted to him they raised a family including their children patti and ron jr and her husband's two children maureen

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and her husband's two children maureen and michael from his previous marriage to jane wyman in 1966 ronald reagan began a second career as a full-time politician and was elected governor of the nation's largest state faithfully discharged the duties upon which he was a strong and popular governor and when he began to run for the presidency she was always by his side and always gazing at him with that loving stare it was for real that wasn't an actress the adoration that they had for each other i congratulate you sir that i don't remember thinking anything except that my gosh here he is and he's president my ronnie my ronnie after her husband's inauguration as part of the conservative reagan revolution of 1981 nancy reagan's signature was appearing in designer gowns especially red ones she also redecorated the white house both moves drew heavy criticism mr president do you think your wife got a bad rap we talked about it the other night her and

the press and oh yes and i think it was because of a a kind of an opposition to me and everything i stood for that they picked on her but she had her own special grit especially after an attempted assassin's bullet struck her husband i remember sitting in the anteroom with her and we were dealing with a few things that had to be dealt with and there was this pounding and she said they're pounding on his back and it was really shocking i mean it was bam bam just to you know to get everything moving and she was she was she never left that hospital few knew then how close the president had come to dying just a couple of months into his first term yes touch and go yes it was

00:46:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=2760s)

term yes touch and go yes it was i almost lost him the nurse would come in periodically and give me updates then i remember one time she said well we may have to leave the bullet in there and i said leave it in i don't think that sounds very good and they finally found it an inch from his heart was there a time truthfully where you thought you'd lose them oh yes yes she also battled breast cancer and survived through it all she had many admirers and some critics too chief of them her husband's former chief of staff donald regan who wrote a blistering book about her including the fact that she sometimes consulted an astrologer yet another sign of just how devoted they were to one another apparently from what we hear he's chosen to attack my wife and i don't give kindly upon that at all she also used her influence to have a substantive impact an anti-drug program was reduced to a simple phrase when a young girl asked for advice and the first lady simply said just say no i didn't mean that that was the whole answer obviously but it did serve a purpose after she and her husband left washington she needed her stamina more than ever as she struggled for years with ronald reagan's alzheimer's it it's sad to see somebody you love and have been married for so long and you can't share memories [Music] that's the sad part through it all she never lost the sunny optimism which was reagan-esque do you ever feel that fate treated you badly no no when you when when you balance it all out i've had a pretty fabulous life after her husband lost his battle with alzheimer's she was the focal point of a majestic state funeral

00:48:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=2881s)

state funeral nancy none of us can take away the sadness you are feeling i hope it is a comfort to know how much he means to us and how much you mean to us as well we honor your grace your own courage and above all the great love that you gave to your husband after president reagan's burial she stayed largely out of public view and her heart ached there are people who told me that it gets much easier well maybe for them but not for me i miss him more now than i ever did i remember more now than i ever did all the little things that we do she looked frail in one of her final public appearances the celebration of the centennial of ronald reagan's birth and i know that ronnie would be thrilled and is thrilled to have all of you share in his 100th birthday doesn't seem possible but that's what it is what she will be remembered for most of all is her steady unflinching devotion to her husband both in and out of the spotlight suzanne malveaux cnn nancy reagan former first lady of the united states who died this morning at 94. let's bring in presidential historian douglas brinkley to try to put nancy reagan's life into a little bit more historical context and douglas obviously there have been many influential first ladies but she really blazed a path of her own in many ways well she absolutely did it was first off the great american love story you know i

00:50:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=3000s)

the great american love story you know i met mrs reagan out in beverly hills with the idea of getting ronald reagan's white house diaries he kept a daily diary log as president and hand wrote it and i wanted to be the one who got in and edited it and i met mrs reagan at a beverly hills hotel and she had one stipulation before she let go of these diaries to me and she said never tell anybody what my husband would do he was a pragmatic conservative and none of these pundits they know how he would deal with syria or deal with isis and she couldn't stand that people would put words in her husband's mouth when i finally got the diaries jake i was stunned to see passages where ronald reagan would you know very upbeat optimistic guy would turn incredibly mopey and right nancy is gone for the day i'm looking out the window waiting for her return and

you look at those passages and then read the letters that they wrote to each other and you realize that they had a co-dependent marriage and that that became a co-dependent presidency ronald reagan was the nice guy who liked to tell everybody how wonderful they were and that was genuine he loved everybody she was the the judge of character and if she thought somebody didn't have her her husband's interest in mind she nixed them so she was a a i you can't overestimate how important she was for the reagan revolution and reagan's eight years in the white house and doug you had a special insight into nancy reagan having met with her having talked to her having having worked with her on those diaries she was obviously a fierce protector of her husband's legacy but what was she like as a person um she when i was given the diaries i told you know because she would she had to let me have them they said if you ever get in a weird moment with her talk about hollywood movies and sure enough i mean she loved hollywood she like liked vanity fair magazine she liked hearing about all the new movies that were going on all the time she also i once said to her that i'm not a conservative boy you're giving me the

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a conservative boy you're giving me the diaries it's a conservative i'm not a con part of the conservative movement and she glared at me and said my son is more liberal than you'll ever be what's your point um she thought ronald reagan was an american president after all ronald reagan voted for franklin roosevelt four times he had used to be a democrat and he had while the the the right in america celebrates him almost like a patron saint ronald reagan nancy reagan's the one that said my husband represented all of the american people not just republicans and she was very keen on that i i spoke with her when they're trying to take franklin roosevelt's face off the dime and put ronald reagan on and she was outraged by that she said my husband would never want to see fdr's face taken off off a dime so there was a side of her about america about that her both of them saw themselves as champion of america not just the republican party they met when he was president of a union president of the screen actors guild and there was a different nancy davis who was in hot water because of the house on american activities committee in congress looking for communists all over the country especially in hollywood in some cases and that's when she met the man who would become the love of her life well that's right jake and and she wasn't just in hot water she was in today's parlance a hot actress she was dating the the leading men of hollywood she was very sought after and ronald reagan just melted over her and they they formed a she felt i think you know that previously when she would date different people there was no magic to it and then suddenly the two of them just formed this great sweetness and part of it became a you know she loved bel air beverly hills a lot he loved up by santa barbara the ranch but they they traded off on those likes so she would go horseback ride riding with him and spend time with them in rustic settings um and they just had a

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rustic settings um and they just had a kind of relaxed feel about them all but ronald reagan could be very jealous there's a famous photograph when frank sinatra was kind of grabbing nancy for a dance and you could see ronald reagan standing there like um don't you're not you know i don't like you dancing with frank sinatra they were they were leaders jake of a set they are you know part of it the annenberg set of palm springs rancho mirage part of it belair you know but part of the the world of arts in many ways and that's really what she loved personally the most but as a warrior in her later years she was a warrior to stamp out alzheimer's disease and anybody who joined that cause was her friend she loved the fact that teddy kennedy would call her and talk about how can we take a war on alzheimer's and he would be one of the first people always senator kennedy to call her on her birthday and sing her you know irish you know happy birthday nancy so she had it she she liked people that loved her husband that were kind and friendly but if you were an enemy like donald regan look out and i've talked to people like james baker and others who she loved james baker and george schultz well well she should have they were two of our greatest states persons and nancy reagan is the one that saw as a talent scout those two have my husband's interest to mine and she doubled and tripled down on schultz and baker helping to kind of create the inner circle of the reagan white house ronald reagan who ran for president four times the first two times not successful 1968 in 1976 but he kept trying and he was only able to do so because he had the love and support of his wife nancy reagan

former first lady nancy reagan who's dead at 94. let's bring wolf blitzer back into the conversation wolf this is the loss of an icon and also in many ways the the end of an era the influence of ronald reagan may still be felt in the nation but that's the end of the first couple the reagans

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first couple the reagans the influence is enormous and jake you and i we've been covering this republican presidential campaign all of these republican candidates not only this cycle but all the cycles since his presidency they speak of the that reagan legacy the impact that ronald reagan had as president of the united states and the impact that he had was certainly influenced by nancy reagan gloria borger is still with us gloria after they left office she became very very involved in lots of causes during her the presidency where she was actively engaged in alcohol and drug abuse to try to prevent alcohol and drug drug abuse a lot of us remember her saying just say no but then it expanded in subsequent years right and i think this doug brinkley was was referring to this because after her husband was diagnosed with alzheimer's she came out publicly and said that she was determined to do whatever she could to save other families from the pain she was going through and that began her fight for embryonic stem cell research and she began this fight after president bush announced the policy ruling out federal funds for almost all embryonic stem cell research but as doug was talking to she and talking about she and ted kennedy became friends in this fight and she actually was on the phone lobbying republican congressmen and senators to vote for a bill to increase funding for for stem cell research and she eventually you know she when she set her sights on the senate she was out there she was out there making making calls dealing with kennedy dealing with bill frist and she there were some suggestions that she actually turned people like john mccain around on the issue maybe bill first found the issue

00:58:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=3480s)

bill first found the issue and she she was working so hard because she believed honestly that it was a way to uh to help others deal with the problem that that she had been had been dealing with and then in the end when president obama officially reversed bush's policy nancy reagan issued a statement in support of what obama had done saying that she was grateful that he lifted the restrictions and that the new rules would make it possible for science to move forward on this important issue and you know i think she wished it had been done sooner uh wolf but she was tireless in working to make sure that it got done at all yeah i remember that very very vividly ronald reagan after he left office was diagnosed in 1994 with alzheimer's and they passed away in 2004 she often described that decade as a long goodbye that she had in caring for him and advocating for new research into cures for what she described as the disease that was taking ronnie from her our own you know larry king he often spoke with nancy reagan i want to play a little clip gloria when she remembered her first date with ronald reagan right away right away uh-huh it was a blind date as you know it was a blind date and i knew right away took him a little bit longer she said right away took him a little bit longer uh but then eventually they got married and uh by all accounts gloria and you alluded to this earlier they had a wonderful wonderful marriage [Music] gloria can you hear me i think we may

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gloria can you hear me i think we may have lost gloria but she did but uh we did have uh recollections of that amazing amazing marriage that had they had that relationship they had the influence that she had on the then president of the united states and after he left office we're going to continue to remember nancy reagan she passed away unfortunately in her home in los angeles this morning at the age of 94 the cause of death congestive heart failure we'll be right back [Music] welcome back and if you're just joining us we are mourning the loss of former first lady nancy reagan who died this morning at the age of 94 from heart failure we're getting all sorts of statements and memorials from people who knew her most recently from former president george w bush and his wife from former first lady laura bush a statement saying laura and i are saddened by the death of former first lady nancy reagan mrs reagan was fiercely loyal to her beloved husband and that devotion was matched only by her devotion to our country her influence on the white

house was complete and lasting during her time as first lady and since she worked to fight drug abuse and raise awareness about breast cancer when we moved into the white house we benefited from her work to make those historic rooms beautiful laura and i are grateful for the life of nancy reagan and we send our condolences to the entire reagan family let me bring back historian presidential historian douglas brinkley who knew nancy reagan who worked with nancy reagan on the publication of her late husband ronald reagan's diaries and douglas as former president george w bush just alluded to nancy reagan was active in combating drug abuse one can look back and and critique whether or not the

01:02:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=3721s)

and and critique whether or not the programs worked as the government wanted them to but what were the origins of the uh for want of a better term the just say no campaign why was she motivated uh to seek that as an area where she would be involved well for starters she was in california in the 1960s and 70s where lsd was widespread the marijuana revolution pill abuse and so she started picking up on that and of course she had children of that age where that were influenced by flower power and and it all seemed okay in the 60s and 70s but people started getting ill from drugs and dying then in 1980 she was on the campaign trail for her husband was in new york and talked to a young woman who said what can we do i have a drug problem and she at one point just said just say no and that phrase was spontaneous but it got picked up in our popular culture and she decided early in the first term by 1982 to really make that what you know betty ford uh was very involved with issues of substance abuse uh but you had nancy reagan kind of stepping in and saying how do we get kids off of of of drugs that are addicted to treat them at treat them as humans and douglas very very quickly if you could um on march 30th 1981 the attempted assassination of president reagan how did that change nancy reagan's world how how was her role as first lady altered i think that's the key question you just asked jake i think her everything went topsy turvy she was really worried that she lost ronnie and she became a hand holder watching after him every minute making sure he's eating okay making sure he's all right it became a full-time job of hers because she felt this great sense of loss and i think the reagans got closer to god by after that experience their sense of praying and worshiping i don't mean church-wise i just mean looking for spiritual help and and she started then seeing that her

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and and she started then seeing that her husband had a great opening with gorbachev on nuclear weapons disarmament all right presidential historian douglas brinkley thank you so much we're going to take a very quick break more right after this quick break the passing of from our former first lady nancy reagan this is cnn breaking news [Music] ronnie and nancy it was truly an american love story i can't imagine marriage being any other way but the way that ronnie's in mine was and i guess that's unusual a little bit of a miracle too right something in the gods brought you together [Music] fortunately oh my dear a relationship not based on politics or power but simply admiration and affection [Music] the joy they shared a sharp contrast to the unsettled childhood she endured born anne francis robbins in new york city her mom and dad separated before she was even born her mother edith toured with a theater company while the future first lady lived with an aunt and uncle when she was seven her mother married a chicago neurosurgeon named loyal davis he adopted her and until she headed west to hollywood to become an actress she lived and grew up in chicago known by the nickname nancy she told me that mgm was like a big family that she signed with mgm she became part of that family they took care of her she wasn't you know afraid even at her age to go out there by herself because she was surrounded by

01:06:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=3960s)

she was surrounded by people to help her so young so trusting trust me once in hollywood nancy davis was busy but she almost failed before she even began because it was the error of joe mccarthy and the infamous red scare witch hunt in 1949 her name appeared on a target list of suspected communist sympathizers upset she turned to a friend for help but out of this language came the most dramatic turning point of her life her friend set up a meeting with the president of the screen actors guild a dashing leading man named ronald

reagan i have my suspicions based on listening to her talk about it that she really was she wanted to fix this but she also wanted to meet ronald reagan because she had heard how available and cute he was and thus began one of hollywood's and washington's most enduring romances in fact one of her last screen appearances was playing opposite her future husband in a movie called hellcats of the navy her official biography still featured on the current white house website quotes her as saying my life really began when i married my husband after being wed in this california church she did become devoted to him they raised a family including their children patti and ron junior and her husband's two children maureen and michael from his previous marriage to jane wyman in 1966 ronald reagan began a second career as a full-time politician and was elected governor of the nation's largest state faithfully discharged the duties upon which he was a strong and popular governor and when he began to run for the presidency she was always by his side and always gazing at him with that loving stare it was for real that wasn't an actress the adoration that they had for each other i

01:08:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=4080s)

that they had for each other i congratulate you sir [Applause] that i i don't remember thinking anything except that my gosh here he is and he's president my ronnie my ronnie after her husband's inauguration as part of the conservative reagan revolution of 1981 nancy reagan's signature was appearing in designer gowns especially red ones she also redecorated the white house both moves drew heavy criticism mr president do you think your wife got a bad rap we talked about it the other night her and the press and oh yes and i think it was because of a kind of an opposition to me and everything i stood for that they picked on her but she had her own special grit especially after an attempted assassin's bullet struck her husband i remember sitting in the anteroom with her and we were dealing with a few things that had to be dealt with and there was this pounding and she said they're pounding on his back and it was really shocking i mean it was bam bam just to you know to get everything moving and she was she was she never left that hospital few knew then how close the president had come to dying just a couple of months into his first term yes touch and go yes it was i almost lost him the nurse would come in periodically and give me updates then i remember one time she said well we may have to leave the bullet in there and i said leave it in i don't think that sounds very good and they finally found it an inch from his heart was there a time truthfully where you thought you'd lose him oh yes yes she also battled breast cancer and survived through it all she had many admirers and some critics too chief of them her

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and some critics too chief of them her husband's former chief of staff donald regan who wrote a blistering book about her including the fact that she sometimes consulted an astrologer yet another sign of just how devoted they were to one another apparently from what we hear he's chosen to attack my wife and i don't get kindly upon that about she also used her influence to have a substantive impact an anti-drug program was reduced to a simple phrase when a young girl asked for advice and the first lady simply said just say no i didn't mean that that was the whole answer obviously but it did serve a purpose after she and her husband left washington she needed her stamina more than ever as she struggled for years with ronald reagan's alzheimer's it it's sad to see somebody you love and been married for so long and you can't share memories that's the sad part through it all she never lost the sunny optimism which was reagan-esque do you ever feel that fate treated you badly no no when you when when you balance it all out i've had a pretty fabulous life after her husband lost his battle with alzheimer's she was the focal point of a majestic state funeral nancy none of us can take away the sadness you are feeling i hope it is a comfort to know how much he means to us and how much you mean to us as well we honor your grace your own courage and above all the great love that you gave to your husband after president reagan's burial she stayed largely out of public view and her heart ached there are people who told me that it gets much easier [Music]

01:12:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=4320s)

[Music] well maybe for them but not for me i miss him more now than i ever did i remember more now than i ever did all the little things that we do she looked frail in one of her final public appearances the celebration of the centennial of ronald reagan's birth and i know that ronnie would be thrilled and is thrilled [Music] to have all of you share in his 100th birthday doesn't seem possible but that's what it is what she will be remembered for most of all is her steady unflinching devotion to her husband both in and out of the spotlight suzanne malveaux cnn truly wonderful woman indeed nancy reagan passed away this morning at her home in los angeles at the age of 94 a spokes spokesperson for the former first lady saying the cause of death was congestive heart failure mrs reagan will be buried at the ronald reagan presidential library in simi valley california right next to her husband the late president ronald wilson reagan who died on june 5th 2004 this statement goes on to say that prior to the funeral service there will be an opportunity for members of the public to pay their respects at the library you're looking at pictures of the ronald reagan library there details the library will announce shortly we just received a statement also from former president george w bush and former first lady laura bush it says this laura and i are saddened by the death of former first lady nancy reagan mrs reagan was fiercely loyal to her beloved husband and that devotion was matched only by her devotion to our country her influence on the white house was complete and lasting during her time as first lady and since

01:14:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=4441s)

during her time as first lady and since she worked to fight drug abuse and raise awareness about breast cancer when we moved into the white house we benefited from her work to make those historic rooms beautiful laura and i are grateful for the life of nancy reagan and we send our condolences to the entire reagan family that statement from former president george w bush kyran skinner is joining us now a biographer of ronald reagan your thoughts on this sad day kyron well it's for me um a stunning day to find that nancy reagan is no longer with us um but what i'd like to really add to this conversation is something i think many people don't know when i as an african-american woman was a postdoc at ucla in the mid 1990s nancy reagan gave me access nearly exclusive access to president ronald reagan's private papers the only other person at that time who had access to the papers were ed um was edmond morris the official biographer i'd written her about my interest in writing on the end of the cold war she didn't know me at all i'd never met her she talked to george schultz about me and then we met at president reagan's los angeles office at that point he had had alzheimer's and it was or was nearing nearing that period and what was fascinating was that she didn't know much about my background she took um took shelter's word and also talked to bud mcfarland former national security advisor she was interested i remember in that conversation and having accurate histories of reagan and his legacy his presidency in the end of the cold war written there were no stipulations on my use of those papers ever and that work ended up in reagan in his own hand reagan of life and letters co-authored with martin and andy annalise anderson those books began really a revision of reagan's presidency when we showed

01:16:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=4560s)

when we showed that he wrote thousands and thousands of letters speeches political tracts and other documents that no one really knew about so in that way i came into her life in the post-presidency years and i watched her very carefully be concerned about and wanted to help shape in the way that she could reagan's legacy and i was just really honored to participate from that vantage point and you had unique insight into that role she played and i think it was a critically important role it changed the world literally the personal relationship that developed between ronald reagan and uh the former soviet president he was then newly uh soviet president mikhail gorbachev that helped end the cold war talk a little bit about what her role was then by the person yes i'm trying to hear you so you were talking about nancy reagan's i was talking about nancy reagan's role and her husband's engaging forming a personal relationship with mikhail gorbachev nancy reagan many have said well she's the one that persuaded her husband to engage with the soviet general secretary to take a more conciliatory tone in the um cold war change and calm down his rhetoric and actually see it that way what i thought what i have found in my research is that nancy and ronald reagan were in lockstep in their view that before there could be serious engagement with the soviets that the

u.s military build up their ability with allies had when to return we saw them coming together these spectacular summits more than any other cold war president four in total and nancy was part of that but i think it wasn't that she was persuading her husband as much as she was confident after the military buildup

01:18:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=4680s)

military buildup after the re-engagement of allies after the missile defense program was put in place that it was time to deal with a soviet general secretary and in fact mikhail gorbachev was a new generation of soviet leaders it was a perfect timing and nancy was critical in that way to the end of the cold war she certainly was i remember covering those years very very closely kyron i want you to stand by with us we're going to continue to remember nancy reagan who unfortunately passed away this morning at the age of 94. we'll take a quick break much more right after this [Music] you're looking at live pictures of the ronald reagan presidential library in simi valley california that's where nancy reagan will be buried right next to her husband the former president ronald reagan she passed away this morning at her home in los angeles at the age of 94 a spokes person saying the cause of death was congestive heart failure just getting another statement the tributes are pouring in another statement this one from former president jimmy carter rosalind and i are saddened by the passing of former first lady nancy reagan she will always be admired for her strength of conviction and her lifelong devotion to her husband her just say no campaign prevented many young people from falling prey to the allure of drug use and her advocacy for stem cell research raised public awareness and influenced decision makers about vital research for alzheimer's disease we extend our condolences to her family at this difficult time that statement from former president jimmy carter nancy reagan was good friends and spent

01:20:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=4800s)

nancy reagan was good friends and spent many occasions talking with larry king right here on cnn i want to play this excerpt from one interview she gave larry this was back in 2007 we're back with nancy reagan in sunny california the publication of the reagan diaries and you are in are you in every other notation this book could be called nancy i know i know well i i knew of course that he said a lot of those things to me but it's very touching to see that he wrote them was any of it at all since you're such a private person i've gotten to know you very well you look up private and dictionary any of it too private for you i don't think so no and all that he said about me that wasn't terribly private it was personal and sweet very sweet so sweet it was true we didn't like to be apart do you realize how strange your marriage was i'm strange different i guess it was but some who was i talking to this morning somebody and we're talking about marriage and i can't imagine marriage being any other way but the way that ronnie's in mine was wrong and i guess that's unusual a little bit of a miracle too right something in the in the gods brought you together fortunately you have so many friends that you know you can't be lonely or are you well i'm lonely because i

01:22:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=4921s)

or are you well i'm lonely because i don't have him and you know everywhere i look there's a reminder of him which is the way i i want it really i mean in the house i have pictures all around and you go to the library and i go to the library but how fortunate i am a friend of mine whose husband had died said nancy you're so lucky when george died he didn't leave me anything that i could work on you have the library and that must mean a lot to you i never thought of it like that but it does mean a lot to me you have something yes left by him the great interview that was and larry king is joining us on the phone right now larry i know you're suffering from a little bronchitis but this must be an especially sad moment for you larry because those of us who watched all of your interviews with nancy reagan over the years were so moved yeah she i got very close with her the last 20 years and spent so many moments with her lunch with her dying with her i was frank sat next to her frank sinatra's funeral so many memories with nancy she's a wonderful friend very lively she loved to gossip she loved hollywood liked hollywood better than washington uh she was a you knew well she was a gal you know she was a good gal loyal to her husband at at the expense of all ours he was it you didn't cross um he didn't cross him and not come in contact with nancy there there'll never be and when you

01:24:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=5040s)

there there'll never be and when you they were bonded i i think i totally agree everybody who knew them probably agrees with you as well larry uh you know those of us you know you do interviews with prominent people so do i talk a little bit about what she was like off camera as opposed to on camera was there much of a difference what we saw behind the scenes as opposed to what we saw when there was a formal interview on larry king live well the best i could put it is well she was more gossipy off camera she wanted to know all the dirt about her what did you think of this is she going with him are they having a bad relationship she had to know everything i mean we'd be i was at a formal affair with the the red dress or fan they held him at the library every year honoring all the first ladies and they have all the first ladies come to this and they wear a red dress in honor of the red dress events but they raise money and as we're walking out walking i escorted her out she's whispering to me about this hollywood actress who had just broken up and did i think she was having an affair with this guy she is she just she loved that dish there she loves her friends she has a very close group of lady friends they met regularly for lunch very sad at the end of the wolf she was confined to a wheelchair she couldn't speak very well i think she was ready to go in fact she was saying she was ready to go years ago but i think she was really ready to go and she was so disappointed with politics this year last time we spoke to her you know what she said do you believe this larry do you believe this that's all she said do you believe this i don't think she got over what then what was going on with her party and i'm sure she was wondering how

01:26:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=5161s)

and i'm sure she was wondering how ronnie would have taken all this she was terrible you remember larry the first you remember larry the first time you met her first time remember i was at the white house i took my daughter she invited me to a marvin hamlisch concert and i sat right this way behind her the president with my daughter kyle and that had to be kyle would be about 19 70 something in there in their first term he became president on january 20th 1981 and he left office on january 20th 1989 the whole the 80s which was a remarkable period which saw the beginning of the end of the cold war a remarkably historic moment in american history and world history indeed and a lot of people didn't really appreciate how significant a role she played behind the scenes in helping her husband get through those those years you hit it on the head wolf i don't think we'd have had that treaty without nancy who kept encouraging him stay with it a lot of people thought she was very right-wing but she was the opposite of that inside that household she would be the moderate she was always look we got to have peace there's nothing more valuable than peace don't listen to the extremists on either side she was pulling for that all the way i don't think we'd have had it without her and she was always skeptical of some of her husband's top aides she was always worried that they may not necessarily have his best interests at heart but they were looking to to advance themselves right oh boy you hit it on the head and she

01:28:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=5281s)

oh boy you hit it on the head and she she trusted no one when it came to her husband i mean she was and she was loyal to a court if you were her friend you were her friend and if you weren't her friends you who weren't her friends she drew the line in the sand and you know those of us who remember covering those years larry remember he was always very optimistic very happy very outgoing she was much more skeptical of almost everything and it was a great connect it was a great combination it sure was because you could hit it right on the nail again she was what he was she was yid yang ronnie had that big smile nancy smile was a lot uh formed by being a hollywood actress she knew how to put on the pose but uh she was the strength in that house she was the strength and with those politicians around him and she could bury people she didn't like i never met names now but she was when she you knew what she thought when you were around her there was no giving gap give-and-go with with nancy reagan she held her around she was qui i think i called her quite a lady she was a doll she was a she was a good good good lady she was fun to be around she was smarter than a lot of people gave her credit for and she was she was a dad she was a great first lady and and she was obviously tremendously influenced by the assassination attempt during his first year as

president of the united states a lot of us remember right outside the washington hilton hotel you remember that day today none of us who lived through that period will ever forget uh and then he was rushed to george washington university hospital uh and he said something to the

01:30:02 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=5402s)

hospital uh and he said something to the effect i forgot to duck uh it was you know it was touch and go larry as those of us remember his doctors later said uh he could have easily passed away but fortunately he didn't when i had my heart attack i was put in the same cubicle where he was brought i had an association with the reagans i was also there when they came out in favor of the law of the guy who passed away his uh pr guy what's the name of the you know this young guy got shot in the head but survived that was uh that was yeah the depressed jim brady the press secretary well as they at the george washington university center when reagan came out for the brady law a lot of republicans were upset about that i can't figure out why but there was a big day for him to come out for that and then when she came out strong for funding for alzheimer's she nancy was a fighter and she did make a difference on alzheimer's she made a difference on drug alcohol and drug abuse all of us remember who just say no campaign that really was significant and affecting millions and millions of people's lives any final thoughts larry before i let you go about nancy reagan and her passing i'll miss her i love socializing with her i love gossiping with her i love talking with her and i'm glad she isn't or if there's one thing glad about this she isn't around to see the end of this political year because she was very upset by this must be tough for you wolf i i feel for it well nancy reagan was a wonderful wonderful woman she lived a wonderful life 94 years old is a good life but it's still very sad

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still very sad to know that we don't have her but these statements larry that are coming in from world leaders i'm getting statements from the former president of israel shimon peres issuing a statement it's only just beginning the remembrance of nancy reagan and the unique role she played in american history larry thanks as usual for joining us i know this is a sad time for you larry larry king joining us from los angeles thank you larry king spent a lot of quality time with nancy reagan over the years and all of us who watch those interviews on larry king live right here on cnn will always remember those interviews let's take a quick break much more on lancy reagan when we come back did he like writing he loved writing letters to the last of the letter writers the letters yes and isn't it sad no he wouldn't have been an email guy no he wouldn't no he wouldn't but isn't it sad now that nobody writes anymore no i mean this of course a diary that's out of the question nobody's going to do that and imagine historically to see the diary with his handwriting is it hard for you hard for you to look at it in a way cooper thanks very much for joining us i'm so honored to be standing next to first lady nancy reagan so nice to see you thank you very much for inviting us tonight oh you're welcome delighted to have you here it's such an extraordinary facility you must be very proud of it i am i am certainly so well thank you again so much for hosting us tonight that was eight years ago when anderson cooper moderated a republican presidential debate at the ronald reagan

01:34:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=5640s)

presidential debate at the ronald reagan presidential library in simi valley california nancy reagan was then welcoming anderson to that historic debate once again we want to welcome back our viewers here in the united states and around the world we're reporting the sad news that nancy davis reagan the former first lady of the united states passed away this morning at her home in los angeles at the age of 94 the cause of death congestive heart failure just got a statement in from former president bill clinton and former first lady hillary clinton former secretary of state statement from the former president hillary and i were deeply saddened to learn of nancy reagan's passing nancy was an extraordinary woman a gracious first lady proud mother and devoted wife to president reagan her ronnie her strength of character was legendary particularly when tested by the attempted assassination of the president and throughout his battle with alzheimer's she leaves a remarkable legacy of good that includes her tireless advocacy for alzheimer's research and the foster grandparent program we join all americans in extending our prayers and condolences to her beloved children

and her entire family during this difficult time that statement from former president bill clinton catherine fenton is joining us on the phone now she's a former assistant social secretary to nancy reagan catherine thank you very much for joining us very sad times talk to us a little bit about what goes through your mind on this sad day well thank you wolf i'm honored to contribute to this tribute to such a significant woman who had a personal impact on my life over 30 years ago when i joined my first white house staff and she was a a remarkable woman both personally and professionally she overcame so many personal challenges

01:36:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=5760s)

she overcame so many personal challenges both as a young young child and also in her health her battle against breast cancer which once again she was in a public role so she had to summon the strength to go through that as well as of course the assassination attempt on the president and also bringing greater awareness to the fight against alzheimer's and what scientific uh contributions we could work for as a country so she's joined um yet the remarkable american legacy of american first ladies and i think she really took that legacy and because of the time she was able to make it more influential in public i think that any first lady i've read about they've always had wonderful partnerships to have a successful role in the white house but i think it was more prevalent and more open to the american people that they knew how hard she had to work to support the administration and this agenda as well as find a role for herself and of course she did that so beautifully with bringing attention to fighting the drug scourge in this country and worldwide impact on on children and of course her style and her presence in the white house she she had you know a great finesse you know she did come from hollywood and she had a great eye and that we all as young young women learn so much from her the taste the style the appropriateness the protocol creating an elegant warm evening whether it was for a small private group of friends or a state dinner and she did it very well and she worked hard to make things just as perfect as possible so we will miss her we will really miss her she was remarkable we certainly will

01:38:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=5880s)

remarkable we certainly will we will all miss her do you remember do you know what motivated her while she was first lady of the united states to get involved in that just say no program to to prevent alcohol and drug abuse well i think it was just natural i think it was um as i recall in the 80s we were in the middle of a tremendous cocaine surge and i think in you know she grew up in southern california big city los angeles and the cities were being hit so so hard and affecting middle school children obviously up into high school college and destroying lives destroying families and i think every first lady wants to make a contribution they learn quickly and early on that they have that forum to make an impact and do something positive and i think that was something she really believed in and how could you not you know it was really a win-win as as much of a challenge as it was she wanted to make an impact and she felt strongly about that as a mother obviously she was a devoted mother to ron and patty who of course have our great sympathies right now and other than this here and we were proud of her for sticking with it and it wasn't always popular you know it was a hard challenge and she did it and she certainly did she had a huge impact in that cause catherine fenton former assistant social secretary nancy reagan the former first lady of the united states who unfortunately passed away earlier this morning at the age of 94. catherine thanks very much we'll take a quick break much more on nancy reagan right after this right away right away it was a blind date as you know it's a blind date and i knew right away took him a little bit longer [Music]

01:40:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=6001s)

i want you to imagine just how loud it would sound if all the children in the world shouted just say no at the same time that's how loud i want you to say it if someone offers you drugs so let's practice saying just say no what should you do when someone offers you drugs [Applause] it's a memorable moment back in 1986 in the white house when the first lady nancy reagan was promoting her just say no campaign to stop alcohol and drug abuse and you heard the kids say just say no a lot of us remember covering those moments we're getting statements in from all sorts of world leaders and political leaders as well marco rubio just tweeted

today our nation mourns the loss of nancy reagan a true example of integrity and grace my prayers are with the entire reagan family bernie sanders issued a statement no matter your party or political ideology this is a sad day for america nancy reagan was an exemplary first lady a devoted partner she was her husband's most trusted advisor and as such served our country well even after her time in the white house she was an outspoken advocate for stem cell research to find a cure for alzheimer's nancy reagan had a good heart and she will be dearly missed gloria borger is with me here gloria a lot of people didn't realize how influential a role she played with her husband's presidency a usually influential role first of all of course he listened to her he could be a stubborn guy ronald reagan and he listened to her for example on iran contra when she was trying to get him to apologize for the arms for hostages trade she brought in people like bob strauss who was a real democratic pub at the time and to talk

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democratic pub at the time and to talk to him she brought in others to talk to him and she understood what the political zeitgeist was important also because in order to get to the president a lot of people went through her and said you know this is going badly would you mind telling the president about it and she would say to them why are you telling me to do it and they would say because we know that he will listen to you one other point wolf is that she also understood the importance of the social side of the white house she threw an enormous amount of state dinners she brought alcohol back to the white house after the after the carter years i believe and she believed that you could mix the political with the social that you could get things done in a social environment at the white house that you might not be able to do otherwise and she used those state dinners and she used the dinners upstairs at the white house as a way to bring in members of congress as a way to help her husband with world leaders as well as with domestic politics and that was something she was both criticized for buying expensive white house china you'll recall but it was also something that really worked for ronald reagan and and for her it helped establish that good relationship that he had with tip o'neill who was the house speaker he was a liberal democrat from massachusetts but they worked deals and nancy reagan was uh by all accounts very friendly with tip o'neill's wife and that helped set the stage for some of those deals we're just getting a statement from president obama and the first lady michelle obama let me read it to our viewers nancy reagan once wrote that nothing could prepare you for living in the white house she was right of course but we had a head start because we were fortunate to benefit from her proud example and her warm and generous advice our former first lady redefined the role in her time here later in her long goodbye with president reagan she became a voice on behalf of

01:44:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=6241s)

reagan she became a voice on behalf of millions of families going through the depleting aching reality of alzheimer's and took on a new role as advocate on behalf of treatments that hold the potential and the promise to improve and save lives we offer our sincere condolences to their children patti ron and michael and to their grandchildren and we remain grateful for nancy reagan's life thankful for her guidance and prayerful that she and her beloved husband are together again that statement from president obama and first lady michelle obama that's a beautiful statement gloria and i think it's genuine i think it comes really from the heart they were influenced by nancy reagan who was very generous in helping president mrs obama when they took when they came to the white house right and she also praised president obama after he approved federal funding for embryonic stem cell research which had been her great cause after she discovered that her husband had alzheimer's disease and she saw it as a potential hope for some kind of cure or at least unlocking the mysteries of alzheimer's and in doing so you know she fought george w bush on that and she lobbied in congress for it and it was president obama who finally did what she she thought ought to be done on on research so she kind of went against the grain of the republican party at that point but it was such a personal issue for her because she felt that she didn't want families to suffer the pain that she was living through with ronald reagan and we all remember his letter that he wrote to the american public and i'm sure she had an awful lot to do with that as well i'm sure she did doug brinkley the historian the presidential historian is with us right now as well doug these statements that are coming in from world leaders national leaders political leaders just regular folks i think that these are

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regular folks i think that these are sincere statements people will miss nancy reagan there's no question about it and you're going to have at our funeral people coming from all over the world at cme valley which i think is the prettiest of all of our presidential libraries mrs reagan used to spend a lot of time there trying to make things just right but you look out over the valley and see the you know the land unfold of california heading towards the pacific so all of her friends in california will be there but i think world leaders will be coming politicians she was a major person in our lifetime and is going to be sorely missed i agree you had a great interview with larry king and larry said something that only he could say i think she kind of was ready to pass after she got through that 100th anniversary of her of ronald reagan's birthday she was deeply involved with joanne drake in the reagan library making everything perfect for that and i think then she got into a place that she had she had done what she needed to do and she recognized that the the country had a huge affection for her husband which meant everything to her certainly did it was uh it brings back so many memories uh the nancy reagan passing douglas one final thought give me a final thought on what she did for the for our country i think that it was nancy reagan it's not about just say no it was about gorbachev and the fact is george schultz gets a lot of the credit because he he pushed these this kind of diplomacy but nancy reagan said let's do it um she was not the conservatives were opposed to this sort of negotiation with gorbachev but nancy reagan saw it as a window for world peace a good point she was an amazing amazing woman and our deepest deepest condolences to the family nancy reagan passed away at the age of 94 cause of death congestive heart failure nancy davis reagan she will be missed

01:48:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=6480s)

nancy davis reagan she will be missed we're going to continue our special coverage i'm wolf blitzer in flint michigan much more right after [Music] this there you see her nancy reagan the nation's first lady from 1981 to 1989 she passed away this morning at the age of 94 after a very very full life a life full of love for her husband of more than 50 years a woman who had such a huge role in the white house she was known by many as the personal protector of the former president ronald reagan let's talk about her life and her legacy cnn presidential historian douglas brinkley joins me now where do i begin i was reading a transcript of a fascinating interview diane sawyer did with nancy reagan not that long ago and she asked the former first lady what do you want people to know the one thing about your husband and what she said is what he'd like people to remember is that he made them believe in themselves again and he did there's no question about it and you know ronald reagan had an alcoholic father uh he had to kind of pull himself up in his hard-scrabbled illinois youth i made it big in hollywood and when he married nancy he felt very complete she allowed ronald reagan to feel that his ambitions could be met she backed all of his action at every time she organized dinner parties traveled with him did whatever it took and they were one of the great political couples but also one of the great social couples of of los angeles area i had read that they were an a a quote unquote absolute team in the white house and that is there were many many things that she did for her husband with her husband side by side perhaps she wasn't the leader on foreign

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perhaps she wasn't the leader on foreign policy though she did do a lot when it came to negotiations with gorbachev which we'll get to in a moment but she was his protector and she was his partner in every way absolutely and this is the key thing poppy she decided who should be trusted and who couldn't by nature ronald reagan was gregarious he liked everybody it wasn't an act he's extremely friendly she started seeing people that were looking um you know to ding or dent her husband and she then would cut him off just like cutting a wire off she had a great judge of character and in fact i think it's her belief in people like james baker and george schultz two men that she loved that really helped ronald reagan's foreign policy kind of take the contours it did uh in the cold war climate with gorbachev coming into power and we are expecting comments in just about 15 minutes from now from james baker uh so we'll bring those to you live when when he does come to the podium but let's talk about that let's talk about how i mean look you knew her you spent time with her you got the diaries of her husband from her she trusted you with those talk to me about her

influence on foreign policy when it came to negotiations with gorbachev well because they we we forget now that the hard right did not like they loved the ronald reagan of the evil empire but they did not like the ronald reagan that was willing to negotiate with gorbachev and um so you have people like baker and schultz that thought this is a big historic opening let's do it and ronald reagan naturally you have pillow talk but this nancy was so direct that she felt very strongly that this was the historic opening to make peace in our time so she was the last say if you'd like so i would have to put her as one of the extremely important advisor in the reagan white house and she didn't suffer fools lightly and she was as you said a great protector of her husband so her influence is very large she wrote her own book in 89 after her husband's presidency called

01:52:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=6721s)

89 after her husband's presidency called my turn and she spoke about her experience in the white house she had a great impact on society during her time in the white house and out of the white house especially when it came to the war on drugs when it came to stem cell research when she actually sort of broke ways with former president george w bush on that backing current president obama on that she had a lot of influence even after her time in the white house she did but you know but we have to realize her big crusade was uh to to beat alzheimer's we forget she suffered a lot you know when ronald reagan was shot in in 1981 she had fallen like a day afterwards and broke her ribs she was trying to bring a picture to put in her husband's hospital and she broke her ribs never said a word about breaking them to the press didn't want anybody to focus on her and even with her breast cancer that she had she was more always worried about the health of her husband than herself she was beyond loyal to ronald reagan and as you mentioned to start your program that it's one of the great political and american love stories there's no question about it take me into that moment douglas that day when you're sitting with her and she's handing over the diaries and and i think you said to her you know but but but i'm not necessarily a conservative well not just that uh you know i was told by governor pete wilson that if i got into a jam with this talk about hollywood with her and just be direct and honest she had felt burned by edmond morris who was an official biographer and came out with a book called dutch and so she was very sc skeptical but she knew she needed to let these diaries go to a historian and sure enough over we ate a nancy reagan cobb salad that was the name of it and she talked to me a lot about um not just her husband but about hollywood at that point she there's no as larry king said love to gossip about johnny depp and brad pitt and any movie that just came out that was her great recreation really was the the scoop on the streets of hollywood it

01:54:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=6841s)

the scoop on the streets of hollywood it was just she was a very fun and delightful person and and what is the one thing that has stood out to you most uh about their their love and their life um that there would have been no ronald reagan without her because he just went for all of his qualities he lacked the ability to not like people enough and he didn't really have that that radar to say this person's screwing me over this is where the person's is leaking or you have to fire people sometimes nancy reagan didn't have those problems she was tough as nails and she made grown men quake if she called on the phone and it was a nancy reagan you said whatever you you just didn't want to have her ire aimed your way she was tough wow all right douglas sprinkley thank you so much for helping us remember her today nancy reagan there like her husband well known long before she became first lady she had quite a career in hollywood our susan melville looks back at her life [Applause] ronnie and nancy it was truly an american love story i can't imagine marriage being any other way but the way that ronnie's in mine was and i guess that's unusual a little bit of a miracle too right something in the gods brought you together [Music] fortunately a relationship not based on politics or power but simply admiration and affection together going a long long way born anne francis robbins in new york city she lived and grew up in chicago known by the nickname nancy as an adult she headed west to hollywood to become an actress she signed with mgm she became part of that family at first nancy davis was busy but in

01:56:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=6961s)

at first nancy davis was busy but in 1949 she found her name on a list of suspected communist sympathizers in danger of being blacklisted from the business the person on the list turned out to be another actress with the same name but nancy wanted reassurance she turned to a friend for help who set up a meeting with the president of the screen actors guild a dashing leading man named ronald reagan and thus began one of hollywood's and washington's most enduring romances in fact one of her last screen appearances was playing opposite her future husband in a movie called hellcats of the navy soon after they wed they raised a family including their children patti and ron junior and her husband's two children maureen and michael from his previous marriage to jane wyman in 1966 ronald reagan began a second career as a full-time politician and was elected governor of the nation's largest state california [Music] nancy was always at his side and always gazing at him with that loving stare it was for real that wasn't an actress the adoration that they had for each other i congratulate you sir [Applause] that i don't remember thinking anything except that my gosh here he is and he's president my ronnie my ronnie after her husband's presidential inauguration nancy reagan's signature was appearing in designer gowns especially red ones she also redecorated the white house both moves drawing heavy criticism but she had her own special grit especially after an assassin's bullet struck her husband she never left the hospital few knew then how close the president came to dying just a couple of months into his first term yes touch and go yes it was i almost lost him she also

01:58:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=7081s)

yes it was i almost lost him she also battled breast cancer and survived through it all she had many admirers and some critics too chief among them her husband's former chief of staff donald regan who wrote a blistering book about her including the fact that she sometimes consulted an astrologer he's chosen to attack my wife and i don't have kindly upon that at all she also used her influence to launch an anti-drug program which was reduced to a simple phrase when a young girl asked for advice and the first lady said simply just say no i didn't mean that that was the whole answer obviously but it did serve a purpose after she and her husband left washington she needed her stamina more than ever after ronald reagan was diagnosed with alzheimer's it it's sad to see somebody you love and have been married for so long and you can't share memories [Music] that's the sad part through it all she never lost her optimism do you ever feel that fate treated you badly no no when you when when you balance it all out i've had a pretty fabulous life in 2004 president ronald reagan died in one of her final public appearances the celebration of the centennial ronald reagan's birth she said i know that ronnie would be thrilled and is thrilled [Music] to have all of you share in his 100th birthday doesn't seem possible but that's what it is nancy reagan a strong woman in her own right remembered also for her steady unflinching devotion to her husband both in and out of the spotlight

02:00:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=7201s)

we continue to remember the life and the legacy of former first lady nancy reagan she passed away this morning at the age of 94. quite a woman who has done so much for this country quite a love story that she shared with the former president let's talk to somebody who knew her incredibly well james baker he served as the chief of staff for former president ronald reagan he served as secretary of the treasury during the reagan administration he later served as secretary of state for former president george h.w bush secretary baker thank you so much for being with me thank you very much i'm delighted to be here you know we all know what a woman she was and how forceful she was sort of behind the scenes in the white house but before we talk about how she affected especially foreign policy take us into the love that they shared married for more than 50 years well nancy reagan was indispensable to every success that president reagan enjoyed he was his uh closest advisor she was his constant protector and of course she was the love of his life and uh was a really truly remarkable love affair but her goal uh in life was to be with her man and to protect her man and she did a very good job of that particularly with respect to personnel but also to some extent occasionally with respect to policy and you know she she said in one interview after he passed away they say it gets easier with time but it hasn't gotten easier for me she said i miss him more now than i ever did and it just speaks to the love and you saw it in the way that she would would gaze up at him let's talk about foreign policy something you had a very heavy hand in you said if you wanted to get anything done you

needed nancy on your side well not not to get anything done but on some of the in some of the crunch points and you know uh the first turn i was white house chief of staff the first term first reagan term and uh there were a

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first reagan term and uh there were a lot of new things coming at us at that time and there was some tension and controversy in that white house but she was very much a believer in talking to people she she encouraged him yes in in taking the position that america had to become strong again before we could begin to deal with the soviet union but when the time came and after we had rebuilt america america's defenses and reinvigorated america's leadership role in the world she was very much in favor of him sitting down and talking to the soviets trying to get arms control deals done trying to trying to make progress toward ending a uh war that had lasted for over 40 years what about with iran contra i mean isn't she the one who eventually sort of pushed her husband to apologize well she did and she ron contra of course some people have said was the only stain on an otherwise extraordinarily successful two-term presidency and when it broke she was of course dismayed and uh and very disappointed and and uh and and i'm convinced that she is one of those at least who convinced him to to say this was a mistake i didn't know at the time we were doing it but we were doing it and it was a mistake and it shouldn't have been done she got him to do that the one word that comes to your mind as you remember your your friend the former first lady nancy reagan what is that word well she was a remarkable woman and she was dedicated and committed and she was ex she was head over heels in love with her man one thing that i continually think about is that she was his closest advisor and really his protector you know ronald reagan asked me to be his white house chief of staff after i had run two campaigns against

02:04:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=7440s)

after i had run two campaigns against him right that's a pretty broad gauge approach to things and i'm not sure it will ever happen again in american politics but the driving force behind that decision i think or at least one of the driving forces was nancy reagan she was encouraged in that regard by mike dever and stu spencer but she's the one that really uh i think moved that moved the president toward making that decision she was she was extraordinarily protective of him and she was very very of course committed to him and she had a very good political antenna for judging people that he might put on his staff or work for him who would have their own uh canoe to paddle he she could tell when someone was going to be loyal to the president's agenda and someone who is going to seek to perpetuate their own agenda a great judge of character that is what we have heard uh secretary baker thank you so much for helping us remember her today you're sure welcome thank you we'll be right back [Music] as we remember the life and the legacy of former first lady nancy reagan i want to take you live to simi valley california to the reagan presidential library where paul verkaman is standing by you know paul we all know it as a site of you know one of the first debates this year the cnn debate was there um and and obviously that is the place where she will be laid to rest that's exactly right poppy in fact behind me in the build behind me at the building is president reagan's graveside it's overlooking the pacific and nancy will literally be buried laid to rest right next to him there will be coming up in the next few days a closed casket ceremony let me get

02:06:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=7561s)

days a closed casket ceremony let me get right to it uh visitors can come up here and pay their respects to nancy reagan john hey step on in john high bush you're the executive director of the library of course and as we look behind you the trucks are here already you are making plans for a huge turnout we know that a quarter of a million people came up this hill to pay their respects to ronald reagan what are the plans now for nancy uh very very similar plans obviously as you said she'll be buried right next to the president but in a couple of days there'll be an opportunity for those in the public that would like to pay their respects to walk by to see her coffin and then towards the very end of the week is when we'll have a funeral service we'll should be buried next to president reagan and no doubt many dignitaries will show up here we don't know about a

eulogy yet if i'm not mistaken but can you tell me who you expect would be here well our board of trustees which includes people like secretary george schultz many very famous people that worked for ronald reagan my understanding i think at this point is that president bush 43 and laura plan to make it to the library we're just because this has happened so so uh quickly we don't know exactly who will be coming but in the next 24 hours i'm sure we'll see a long list of dignitaries that will be coming and as we see these flat bed trucks pulling behind us what role are they playing what is going to go on here in terms of uh the library and people being able to pay their respects to nancy yeah these trucks will be coming all day and they'll be doing everything from erecting tents to bleachers to seats and floors and lights and sound and all those things that you can imagine will be involved in such a large funeral occasion like this it'll be a good bit like you saw at president reagan's funeral and she'll be laid right next to him thank you so much for taking time out we really appreciate it well as you hear poppy now a lot of plans underway and they do expect many people to come up the hill here in simi valley and pay their respects to nancy reagan who will be laid to rest here

02:08:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=7680s)

who will be laid to rest here next to her husband as you know she was always well celebrated for her loyalty and being by his side and in this case quite literally back to you poppy the great love of her life she will join him now once again paul verkin thank you so much for that we continue to remember the life and the legacy of former first lady nancy reagan she passed away this morning from heart failure she was 94 years old let's talk about her life especially her time in the white house with her husband former president reagan with charles bierbauer he's a former cnn white house correspondent he was the white house correspondent during the reagan administration he's also dean of the college of information and communications at the university of south carolina thank you so much for being with me and you know as a white house correspondent during the reagan years you got access and a perspective unlike really anyone else to this administration what impact did nancy reagan have on her husband well she had a tremendous impact on her husband and some subtle impact on his administration nancy reagan may have been criticized early in the going for things like fancy dresses and buying china and redecorating the white house where she was just utterly devoted to the man she always called ronnie that was her guy and if you want to ask what uh what kind of a wife she was well i asked my wife to be honest my wife was the associated press correspondent at the white house suzanne shaffer and she summed it up and awarded us stalwart nancy was pretty tough tougher than a lot of people thought uh one moment that comes to mind not quite what you asked me but was when the reagans were visiting moscow for a summit meeting and mrs reagan was uh accompanying

02:10:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=7801s)

and mrs reagan was uh accompanying uh raisa gorbachev to a museum uh raisa got there first and sort of dominated the conversation and when and when mrs reagan arrived she was asked if she had anything to say and initially she she denounced being on on soviet ground and when surprised that raisa had spoken extensively nancy said well i've got a few things to say of course she did and you know what i've heard her described as is his personal protector and also as as an absolute team that they were an absolute team in the white house she very much had an influence on him policy wise whether it was apologizing eventually after iran contra whether it was sitting down with gorbachev the negotiations when it came to the to the soviet union much of that behind the scenes though behind the scenes uh there were a certain small cadre of reagan supporters officials uh people like james baker and mike beaver especially who was very close to them uh going back to california days there were rough spots though and one of the particularly rough ones was when it was learned that mrs reagan was consulting an astrologer as to what would be good times for the president to make speeches to travel this came out at a time when don regan not reagan was the white house chief of staff and he was rather apoplectic when he learned that he also didn't stick around the white house a whole lot longer after that because among all the people in the white house the one the president probably trusted most was the first lady she also very much protected him didn't she after his time in the white house as he was battling alzheimer's on the outside she was a huge advocate for alzheimer's research she also very much kept him to to

02:12:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=7921s)

she also very much kept him to to herself and kept him sort of behind closed doors thinking what is best for my husband well very much so but they were they were very public and honest at a point where it became evident how difficult uh the alzheimer's was making it for for then former president reagan uh to be seen in public he stayed in their home in in los angeles and i remember talking with her at it would have been at the republican convention in san diego in 1996 and at that point she she told me how challenging it was for her because he had reached a point where he won no longer remembered he'd been president and and was at the point where he didn't remember her and there were others mike beaver being one of them who said i can't go see him anymore he doesn't remember me but nancy reagan uh of course stayed with him through that uh entire period up till his death and was very very much i think reflective on the difficulties that alzheimer's creates for families who are experiencing charles bierbauer thank you so much for helping us remember her honor her her life her legacy an extraordinary first lady thank you so much thanks for the opportunity of course quick break we'll be right back we continue to remember the life of nancy reagan the former first lady passed away this morning at the age of 94. tributes and condolences remembering her her legacy her life continue to pour in my colleague paul verkamen is live for us this afternoon at the reagan presidential library in simi valley california and that is where her husband the late president reagan is buried and she will be placed by his

02:14:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=8040s)

is buried and she will be placed by his side right paul that's exactly right papi and in fact she'll be laid to rest next to him in this beautiful area that faces to the west in the pacific ocean that they so both beloved and there will be an inscription that's there right now that reads i know in my heart that man is good that what is right is always eventual always eventually triumph and there is purpose and worth to each and every life that's where the two of them will be you may know that they lived uh at the reagan ranch at a very similar sort of setting uh top of mountain looking out in the pacific so nancy's body will be brought up here in the next couple of days and they are preparing for a large viewing it'll be a closed casket but as we pointed out earlier 250 000 people came up this hill to go ahead and pay their respects to ronald reagan and they expect large crowds as well for nancy and a lot of dignitaries to show up poppy no question paul for camden thank you so much we'll get back to you in just a moment but let's talk more about her life and her legacy we know that she died at her home in los angeles from heart failure david gergen is with me he served as communications director under president reagan an advisor also julian zelizer he is professor of history and public affairs at princeton university david i mean we know she had such an influence in the west wing much of it sort of behind the scenes if you think of one thing that she did that impacted this country the most what was it i think she was a major influence upon her husband uh in negotiating an arms agreement with the soviet union and moving toward an end to the cold war uh you know he came in as a tough anti-communist a campaigner had been that always all that for most of his adult life uh and in the beginning of his administration he had a big arms built up but she was always telling him it's important to talk and for a long time he didn't have a partner to talk to

02:16:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=8160s)

time he didn't have a partner to talk to in soviet union you know the leaders kept on dying on him um but after the build up and gorbachev came into power reagan and gorbachev started talking to each other and they did get together and they were able to lay the foundations for an arms control agreement that it was eventually signed in the h w bush administration you know that went against all the instincts of a lot of conservatives but she emphasized the importance of peace and a peaceful outcome and in the meantime of course the president also uh came up with a strategic defense initiative so-called star wars which i think hastened the end of the cold war too and julian i mean she also sort of is the one who pushed her husband to apologize after iran contra arguably the biggest sort of black stain on this and that administration she had a big role in that in sort of the coming around afterwards she did i mean she was very critical of some of the people who had surrounded him and she blamed them for creating an environment that allowed for iran

contra she pushed him to get out ahead of this and to respond to what was really a significant scandal and and i'd agree with david that you know she was often one of the main voices calling for negotiation and actually facilitating the personal relations with the gorbachevs at a moment many conservatives thought that this was all some big trick by the hardliners and the kremlin okay her impact on on foreign policy very clear but david gergen in the in the the position you had you saw the reagans as many other people did not their love story is renowned i mean their love story is one for the ages what did we not see that was very moving i i i don't think i think it's hard to describe uh just how much of a universe they they had built for themselves and how he many presidents would you know go back to the residence at night and they're on the phone the whole time or they've got people coming and going

02:18:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=8280s)

or they've got people coming and going linda johnson was famously reaching out to people all hours of the night so was bill clinton the reagans this was his refuge to be with nancy at night they rarely you know they would they they had a lot of state dinners because she often believed that the best way to advance politics is through social relationships but they had a very special personal relationship and you as a staff member i was a member of the staff you know you didn't want to penetrate that you didn't want to try to get inside that zone it was very very private there was sort of a curtain there and i think that's where he drew his strength as well as having someone who was a safe person for him you know he was the child of an academic father and there's been a lot written in the academy about how children of academic parents often are insecure they have a hard time forming a relationship it was extremely important to him that he was able to develop his very close relationship and i think she was his anchor julian to get to the president or to get him on your side former secretary james baker worked in the administration said to me you you really wanted nancy reagan on your side to make sure that that would happen yeah she played a very big role behind the scenes uh don regan who has been discussed today had a tense relationship with her and i always talk about her in classes as an example of a first lady who was very careful about the personnel who surrounded her husband and could often be quite tough when she thought people were making the wrong decision she played a similar role in the 1980 campaign helping to switch some of the players involved in the campaign when she didn't think her husband was being advised well so she had quite a reputation uh in the white house and she could be very forceful at times and you know she said that she was yeah poppy yeah go ahead on that questions ronald reagan was very you know he was a very a gregarious man

02:20:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=8401s)

you know he was a very a gregarious man in many ways but but he hated to fire people he just he was just something he didn't like to go through dwight eisenhower was like that as well and you need somebody else to be the enforcer in that situation and she was the enforcer she was the one julian said she kept a close eye it is it's a case book example of someone at your side who becomes a hugely important person i once asked a biographer of lincoln what's the most important asset a president needs and this is david herbert donald and he said a friend a friend she was the first friend his best friend the love of his life no question david gergen julian thank you for helping us remember her today we appreciate it we'll be right back thank you cooper thanks very much for joining us i'm so honored to be standing next to first lady nancy reagan so nice to see you thank you very much for inviting us tonight oh you're welcome i'm delighted to have you here it's such an extraordinary facility you must be very proud of it i am i am certainly so well thank you again so much for hosting us tonight that was our anderson cooper interviewing nancy reagan there at the reagan library back in 2008 the former first lady died this morning of heart failure she was 94 years old and condolences have poured in remembering the woman her life her legacy hillary clinton tweeted last hour quote nancy's strength of character was legendary and her advocacy especially for alzheimer's research was tireless praying for her family bernie sanders also released a statement calling ms reagan an exemplary first lady and governor john kasich released a statement saying quote president reagan has been reunited with his wife and partner but america and the reagan family have lost a woman of grace and strength let's talk about her life her legacy and how she will be honored cnn correspondent paul verkaman is live at the reagan library in simi valley california frank sesno a former cnn white house correspondent

02:22:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=8520s)

former cnn white house correspondent during the reagan administration is with us he's also a producer for the history channel's documentary ronald reagan a legacy remembered and he is director of the school of media and public affairs at george washington university thank you both for being here and paul let me begin with you i understand we know that she will be laid to rest where you are next to her husband there at the library you may know who might preside over the services uh that's right papi and talking to library officials just a short time ago they said that it was nancy's wish that john danforth preside over her services they say this is not etched in stone right now but they're trying to work this out as well as everything else as we said she'll be buried next to ronald reagan on the west side of this uh library facing the pacific ocean there will be an outdoor service and then like her husband from what we understand when her body is brought up here in a closed casket just like ronald reagan the body will lay in repose in the main lobby of the library with many tens of thousands perhaps hundreds of thousands of people being able to come by and pay respects to her and then just sort of a sobering reminder we saw a backhoe come up here and the official said yes that's right they still need to dig her gravesite uh all of them so sad to know that nancy reagan had passed but many of them reflecting on how much they enjoyed being around her when she was up here poppy absolutely and frank to you you know one of her most famous quotes is my life really began when i married my husband but for anyone who may take that the wrong way they should know that she was an absolute partner with him in the white house she influenced him greatly on some very key foreign policy moves she was in many ways his rock his his closest friend and a very close adviser to the president and his protector in chief you know she did influence him she encouraged him to do um uh to do business with mikhail gorbachev the soviet leader she encouraged him to engage with young people and others

02:24:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=8641s)

to engage with young people and others of course she took up her own drug program but it was the protector role that was really most remarkable you know you show that picture this is when the president was in the hospital for his cancer i remember that very well because i was there for that and what struck me was after the we were told that the president had been informed about his own cancer they said he didn't have any questions about that you know he was a very kind of interestingly enough soft-spoken guy but she did and she went into overdrive to figure out what was wrong what the treatments were going to be i remember in 1993 some months before the letter that the president wrote telling the world that he had his alzheimer's a disease there was an event on the uss intrepid in new york and i was privileged enough to be the mc that evening and the president was there president reagan was there he's getting the intrepid freedom award and there were indications poppy that there was something that was not right the president seemed to be hesitant and she was a step in front of him introducing him down the line saying oh ronnie you remember frank oh ronnie you remember so and so she had that instinctive constant ability to be running interference for him it was just out of pure dedication and love and paul for cameron to you i mean you had the chance to meet her multiple times i did uh not only a debate here at the reagan library but when i was a cub reporter in uh santa barbara county frank cessna may remember this they used to put on media barbecues or events and i was fortunate enough to go up there and talk to nancy on a couple different occasions and even though ostensibly it was just a photo op she actually took time out and talked to me a little bit and said she'd watch the notion the local news i'm kind of chuckling because nancy was famous for loving the color red i had on a red shirt she began to talk to me about that one thing i can tell you both from the people here who worked with her and myself there was just this overarching sense of sweetness i think that was the takeaway that many of us had who had an encounter with

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many of us had who had an encounter with her poppy at the same time frank says no she was someone that if you were in that white house and you wanted then president reagan to sit down or consider something or change his position on something uh you wanted her on your side you sure did she she had a sweetness if you were on the right side and the right side of her husband but she was tough and she wielded her own

power center in the white house um a lot of your viewers will not remember this because they're too young perhaps but for those who were around during the reagan presidency they certainly will remember the iran contra scandal in it hurt the president very much it hurt him personally as well and she felt especially after the report came out that he had not been well served especially by his chief of staff donald regan and it was nancy reagan and the east wing her wing of the white house that was part of the process that led him to be fired very summarily and in a very as far as he was concerned undignified way so if you didn't you know fall in line or certainly support the president the way she thought she wasn't shy about about weighing in because you know her her whole world really revolved around him not in a subservient way but in that partner way that you were talking about papi and we saw that in a lot of ways pretty much every day and she's the one who convinced him eventually to come out to apologize for ron contra to try to move forward i have 10 seconds left quickly frank says no one word to describe the woman that nancy reagan was totally in love totally dedicated and totally committed to ronald reagan and the life they made together wow what a woman what a legacy thank you both paul for camden live there in simi valley where she will be laid to rest frank says no thank you for helping us remember her a live look there at the beautiful reagan library in simi valley california where services will be held for nancy reagan we'll be right back

02:28:13 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AboHu17eVe0&t=8893s)

for nancy reagan we'll be right back you

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